



## Research Article

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## An Investigation Study of TV Watching for Albanian Children and Teenagers Living in Tirana

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**Abstract**

*The time children and teens spend in front of TV is one of the most disturbing phenomenon of parents not only in Albania but around the world. Watching TV for a considerable amount of hours is associated with a variety of problems in children, such as obesity, behavioral problems, sleep problems, insufficient engagement in the accomplishment of academic tasks and many other problems. The purpose of this study is to provide a broader overview of the amount of time Albanian children and teenagers in 1st, 5th, 9th and 12th grades spend watching TV. Do they watch more TV before they go to school or when they return from school? Is there a difference between boys and girls in the time they spend in front of the TV? But is there a difference between different age groups in this regard? The study was conducted in Tirana where (n = 698) children and teenagers participated in this study. It turned out that the children and teenagers interviewed watched more TV as they returned from school compared to before going to school. No statistically significant differences were observed between the boys and girls interviewed. No statistically significant differences were observed even between the classes taken in the study, but teenagers were found to watch slightly more TV than children. Important study resolutions are that before going to school most of them do not watch TV at all and after returning from school the highest percentage of the participants watch 1 to 2 hours of TV per day, which is acceptable for their age.*

**Keywords:** TV watching, children, Tirana, sleeping

### 1. Introduction

TV watching is one of the most concerning phenomenon for parents who have children and teenagers. According to (Bar-on, 2000), children and teenagers in America spend more time watching TV than at school. They spend 15 000 hours on average watching TV and 12 000 hours in class during their graduation years. On average a child and / or teenager in America spends 3

hours a day watching TV, and over the past 10 years these figures have had no significant decrease. Children and teenagers watching TV is associated with a number of positive and negative effects.

Access to TV watching is associated with a number of health and behavioral problems. Overweight and obesity can be mentioned in health problems that lead to a number of other diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease or sleep problems (Gortmakers, 2006).

In Albania studies show that the prevalence of overweight is 10.9% and obesity 5.7% among children (Jarani et al., 2016). And the prevalence of overweight and obesity is 21% (Jarani et al., 2018) among Albanian children in Balkan. Short studies with students show that there is a negative relationship between the time of watching TV and their academic outcomes (Strasburger, 1986). Aggressive behavior is one of the other problems that long-term exposure to inappropriate television programming causes to children (Liebert, 1986). Also exposure to uncontrolled and long hours of TV is associated with risky behaviors including alcohol and drug use, and accelerated onset of sexual activity (Villanim, 2001).

However, if children are exposed to moderate-time TV watching, this can positively influence a more diverse viewpoint than the parent or teacher viewpoint, induce prosocial behavior, and positively affect the child's attention and memory (AACHAP, 2014; Karaj, 2000). Various studies suggest that the relationship between TV and child development is complex. It depends on the characteristics of the child, the family and the social context. It also depends on the type of programming that children watch. Different programming can be educational and positively affect the cognitive development of the child (Kostyrka, Cooper, & Simpson, 2017).

But in Albanian reality, how many hours do children spend in front of the television? Do they watch more TV before or after school? Does their gender affect the hours they watch TV?

The purpose of this study is to provide a more detailed overview of the time children and adolescents in 1st, 5th, 9th and 12th grades spend in front of the television. Whether, they watch more TV before going to school or after returning from school. The purpose of this study is also to look at the difference between children of different grades as well as the differences between boys and girls in the time they spend in front of the TV.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Sample**

In this study (n = 698) children and teenagers participated. Questions about how many hours children and teenagers watch tv (n = 669) were answered and 29 questionnaires were invalid. Questions about how many hours children and teenagers watch television after school were answered (n = 683) and 15 questionnaires were invalidated. The first group included (n = 324) boys and (n = 345) girls. The second group included (n = 328) boys and (n = 355) girls.

Children and teenagers were also divided on the basis of their classes. In the first grade (n = 127) students participated, in the fifth grade (n = 167) students, in the ninth grade (n = 194) students and in the 12th grade participated (n = 210) students.

### **2.2 Procedures**

This study was conducted in Tirana. The study were performed in 8 schools selected among a pool of 56 schools. Also the classes were selected randomly from the pool of classes/ school.

### **2.3 Analysis**

The study was conducted in Tirana. The target group of the study group was explained the purpose of the study, then they completed the questionnaire. After the completed questionnaires were obtained, all data were entered and processed with tables in Excel. Descriptive statistics for frequency, comparison and mean values were performed in SPSS software packages 20 version.

### 3. Results

Referring to Table 1, it can be observed that 55.3% of the children and teenagers interviewed do not watch TV before going to school. 19.5% of them watch less than one hour of TV before going to school, 16.5% of them watch 1-2 hours of TV and 4.6% of them watch TV more than 2 hours.

**Table 1:** Frequency Table. Watching TV before School

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	Do Not See TV	386	55.3
	Less Than 1 Hours	136	19.5
	1 till 2 Hours	115	16.5
	More Than 2 Hours	32	4.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>95.8</b>
<b>Missing</b>	System	29	4.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>698</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2 presents the results of children and adolescents regarding the amount of time they spend watching TV after returning from school. 15% of them do not watch TV after school, 27.9% of children and adolescents watch TV less than one hour, 40.7% of them watch 1 to 2 hours of TV, and 14.2% watch more than 2 hours.

**Table 2:** Watching TV after School

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	Do Not See TV	105	15.0
	Less Than 1 Hours	195	27.9
	1 till 2 Hours	284	40.7
	More Than 2 Hours	99	14.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>683</b>	<b>97.9</b>
<b>Missing</b>	System	15	2.1
<b>Total</b>		<b>698</b>	<b>100.0</b>

If we were to analyze the results referring to children's classes we notice that: 1st grade students do not watch TV before going to school in 53.3%, 71.9% of fifth grade students do not watch TV, 9<sup>th</sup> grade students don't watch TV at all in 48.5% of the results, and 12th grade students don't watch TV at all before going to school in 49% of the cases.

22.8% of first grade students watch TV less than an hour before going to school, 13.2% of 5th grade children watch TV less than an hour, 22.7% of 9th grade students watch TV less than an hour and 19.5% of 12th grade students watch less than an hour before going to school.

In terms of watching TV 1-2 hours before going to school the results show 14.2% for first grade students, 10.2% for fifth grade students, 16% for 9th grade students and 23.3% for 12th grade students.

Regarding watching TV for more than 2 hours before going to school, the results in the following table show 3.9% for first grade students, 3.6% for 5th grade students, 7.7% for students in the first grade. 9th grade and 2.9% for 12th grade students.

**Table 3:** Frequency Table. Watching TV before School

Grade			Frequency	Percent
<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Valid</b>	Do Not See TV	69	54.3
		Less Than 1 Hours	29	22.8
		1 till 2 Hours	18	14.2
		More Than 2 Hours	5	3.9
		<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>95.3</b>
	<b>Missing</b>	System	6	4.7
<b>Total</b>			<b>127</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Grade			Frequency	Percent
Grade 5	Valid	Do Not See TV	120	71.9
		Less Than 1 Hours	22	13.2
		1 till 2 Hours	17	10.2
		More Than 2 Hours	6	3.6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>98.8</b>
	Missing	System	2	1.2
<b>Total</b>			<b>167</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Grade 9	Valid	Do Not See TV	94	48.5
		Less Than 1 Hours	44	22.7
		1 till 2 Hours	31	16.0
		More Than 2 Hours	15	7.7
		<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>94.8</b>
	Missing	System	10	5.2
<b>Total</b>			<b>194</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Grade 12	Valid	Do Not See TV	103	49.0
		Less Than 1 Hours	41	19.5
		1 till 2 Hours	49	23.3
		More Than 2 Hours	6	2.9
		<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>94.8</b>
	Missing	System	11	5.2
<b>Total</b>			<b>210</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Regarding the amount of time children and teenagers spend watching TV after returning from school, we can refer to the data in Table 4. 18.9% of first grade students do not watch TV after school, 12% of 5th grade students do not watch TV after school, 16.5% of 9th grade students and 13.8% of 12th grade students do not watch TV after school.

Referring to the study data we can say that 27.6% of the students in the first grade watch TV for less than an hour, 28.7% of the students in the fifth grade watch TV for less than an hour, 30.4% of the students in the classroom 9th and 25.2% of 12th grade students watch TV for less than an hour after returning from school. 40.2% of first grade students, 47.9% of 5th grade students, 33.5% of 9th grade students and 41.9% of 12th grade students watch TV for 1-2 hours after they return from school. 11% of first grade students watch TV for more than two hours when returning from school, and so do 10.8% of 5th grade students, 17.5% of 9th grade students, and 15.7% of 12th grade students.

**Table 4:** Watching TV after School

Grade			Frequency	Percent
Grade 1	Valid	Do Not See TV	24	18.9
		Less Than 1 Hours	35	27.6
		1 till 2 Hours	51	40.2
		More Than 2 Hours	14	11.0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>97.6</b>
	Missing	System	3	2.4
<b>Total</b>			<b>127</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Grade 5	Valid	Do Not See TV	20	12.0
		Less Than 1 Hours	48	28.7
		1 till 2 Hours	80	47.9
		More Than 2 Hours	18	10.8
		<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>99.4</b>
	Missing	System	1	.6
<b>Total</b>			<b>167</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Grade 9	Valid	Do Not See TV	32	16.5
		Less Than 1 Hours	59	30.4
		1 till 2 Hours	65	33.5
		More Than 2 Hours	34	17.5
		<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>97.9</b>
	Missing	System	4	2.1
<b>Total</b>			<b>194</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Grade			Frequency	Percent
Grade 12	Valid	Do Not See TV	29	13.8
		Less Than 1 Hours	53	25.2
		1 till 2 Hours	88	41.9
		More Than 2 Hours	33	15.7
		Total	203	96.7
	Missing	System	7	3.3
Total			210	100.0

The study also compared boys and girls. Table 5 shows the% differences between boys and girls regarding the time they watch TV before going to school and after returning from school. 53.9% of boys do not watch TV before going to school, 20.7% of them watch TV for less than one hour, 16.4% watch 1 to 2 hours and 5.3% more than 2 hours. While 56.4% of girls do not watch TV before going to school, 18.2% of them watch less than an hour, 16.6% of them watch 1 to 2 hours and 4.1% of them watch more than 2 hours of TV before go to school.

**Table 5:** Watching TV before School

Wachting_TV_before_School				
Gender		Frequency		Percent
Boy	Valid	Do Not See TV	174	53.9
		Less Than 1 Hours	67	20.7
		1 till 2 Hours	53	16.4
		More Than 2 Hours	17	5.3
		Total	311	96.3
	Missing	System	12	3.7
Total		323	100.0	
Girl	Valid	Do Not See TV	204	56.4
		Less Than 1 Hours	66	18.2
		1 till 2 Hours	60	16.6
		More Than 2 Hours	15	4.1
		Total	345	95.3
	Missing	System	17	4.7
Total		362	100.0	

Whereas the TV watch time values for boys and girls after school are as in Table 6. 17.3% of boys do not watch TV after school, 27.9% of boys watch TV less than an hour, 41.2% of them watch TV 1 to 2 hours, and 11.1% of them watch more than two hours of TV after school. 13% of girls do not watch TV when they return from school, 27.9% of girls watch TV less than an hour, 40.1% watch 1 to 2 hours of TV and 17.1% of girls watch more than 2 hours of TV after return from school.

**Table 6:** Watching TV after School

Wachting_TV_after_School				
Gender		Frequency		Percent
Boy	Valid	Do Not See TV	56	17.3
		Less Than 1 Hours	90	27.9
		1 till 2 Hours	133	41.2
		More Than 2 Hours	36	11.1
		Total	315	97.5
	Missing	System	8	2.5
Total		323	100.0	
Girl	Valid	Do Not See TV	47	13.0
		Less Than 1 Hours	101	27.9
		1 till 2 Hours	145	40.1
		More Than 2 Hours	62	17.1
		Total	355	98.1
	Missing	System	7	1.9
Total		362	100.0	

This study also examined the differences between boys and girls in each of the classes before they went to school and after they returned from school.

There are 51.7% of first grade boys who do not watch TV before going to school and 57.4% for the girls. 25.9% of Boys watch TV less than 1 hour while 20.6% of girls watch TV for less than one hour. 15.5% of boys watch TV for 1-2 hours while girls are at 11.8%. 3.4% of boys watch TV for more than 2 hours while for girls it's 4.4%.

Results show that 70.9% of fifth grade boys do not watch TV before school while for girls it's 73.8%. Boys who watch less than 1 hour of TV are 11.6% while 13.8% of girls watch less than an hour of TV. Boys who watch TV for 1-2 hours result at 12.8% while girls at 7.5%. 4.7% of boys watch TV for more than 2 hours while for girls it's 2.5%.

45.9% of the ninth grade boys do not watch TV before school whereas for girls it's 51.8%. Boys who watch less than 1 hour of TV are 26.6% while girls who watch less than one hour of TV are 17.6%. Boys who watch TV for 1-2 hours are 14.7% while girls are 17.6%. 8.3% of boys watch TV for more than 2 hours while for girls it's 7.1%.

41.1% of 12th grade boys do not watch TV before school while for girls it's at 48.1%. Boys who watch less than 1 hour of TV are 18.6% while girls who watch less than one hour of TV are 20.2%. Boys who watch TV for 1-2 hours are 24.3% while girls are 24%. 2.9% of boys watch TV for more than 2 hours while for girls its 3.1%.

Data from the examination showed that 20.7% of boys in the first grade do not watch TV after school and girls 17.6%. Boys who watch less than 1 hour of TV are 27.6% while girls who watch less than one hour of TV are 26.5%. Boys who watch TV for 1-2 hours are 37.9% while girls are 42.6%. 12.1% of boys watch TV for more than 2 hours while results show 10.3% for girls. 16.3% of fifth grade boys do not watch TV after school and 7.5% for girls. Boys who watch TV less than 1 hour are 24.4% while girls who watch TV less than one hour are 32.5%. Boys who watch TV for 1-2 hours are 52.3% while girls are 43.8%. There are 7% of boys that watch TV for more than 2 hours while girls are 15%.

In the ninth grade, boys who do not watch TV after school are 19.3% and girls 12.9%. Boys who watch less than 1 hour of TV are 33% while girls who watch less than one hour of TV are 27.2%. Boys that watch TV for 1-2 hours are 32.1% while girls are 35.3%. 12.8% of boys watch TV more than 2 hours while 23.5% for girls.

In 12th grade boys who do not watch TV after school are 12.9% and girls 14%. Boys who watch TV less than 1 hour are 24.3% while girls who watch TV less than one hour are 26.4%. Boys who watch TV for 1-2 hours are 44.3% while girls are 39.5%. 12.9% of boys watch TV more than 2 hours in comparison to girls that are 17.8%.

#### **4. Discussion**

One of the main goals of this study is to find whether children and adolescents watch more TV before going to school or after returning from school. The study results, referring to Tables 1 and 2, clearly show that they watch more TV after returning from school. A large number of them do not watch TV before going to school while a small number do not watch TV after school. After school, the highest percentage of them watches 1-2 hours of TV. According to (AAP, 2011) the optimal time that children and adolescents should watch TV is 1 to 2 hours a day, which coincides with the time that the highest number of children and adolescents watch TV.

Another purpose of the study is to find out who watches more TV between boys and girls. The results of the study, in Tables 5 and 6, show that the difference between boys and girls is not significant, they are approximately the same. Even according to a study by (Moroëatisharifabad, Karimi & Ghorbanzadeh, 2015), statistically the difference between boys and girls when they watch TV has proved to be insignificant.

From the study we can also see the difference between the groups depending on their classes. It turns out that the differences between the groups are minimal. If we refer to how long they watch TV before going to school, those who watch less are fifth grade children while those that watch more than two hours are mostly 9th grade children. Even the children that watch TV after school the differences between the groups are not significantly noticeable, but those that watch more than two hours are mostly 9th and 12th graders. According to (ACP, 2016), teenagers spend more time watching TV than children because their parents do not dilute the rules on the hours they have to spend in front of TV at this age. If during childhood parents are very controlling towards children both on the hours they watch TV and on programming. In teens, parents care more about the programs they watch rather than the hours they spend watching. Even according to a study done by (Robinson, 2011), in the US, in which both children and adolescents participated, children

spent an average of 2.5 hours per day watching TV and adolescents averaged 4.5 hours per day.

The study gives us data on a significant number of children and adolescents, which is a strong point of study. The other strong point of the study is that both boys and girls were studied, making possible a comparison between them.

The strong point of the study is also that it has received a wide age distribution of the students in 4 different age groups.

But the study was conducted only in the city of Tirana and not in the whole of Albania, making it a demographically limited study.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, we can say that Albanian children and adolescents in the study spend a considerable amount of 1 hour to 2 hours of TV per day. This is an acceptable amount for their age. They watch more TV after returning from school than before going to school. No statistically significant differences were observed between boys and girls. And, by comparing the 4 groups of children surveyed, teenagers are the ones who watch the most TV. Despite the problems that Watching TV causes with long hours, we can also say that if it is watched part-time and in appropriate programming it can also have a positive impact on the development of children and teenagers.

It is recommended that children and adolescents reduce the amount of time they watch TV and increase the amount of time they engage in physical activities to reduce the number of problems caused by it.

It is recommended that another study be carried out to study children and adolescents throughout Albania and not only in Tirana.

It is recommended that there should be promotion of more physical activities in children's education programs.

It is recommended that parents control the length of time and television programming of their children.

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